Supreme Court, U.S.
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No. 07-68

In The

Supreme Court of the United States

DAVID A. DIAZ, JR.,

Petitioner,

v.

EDWARD S. ALAMEIDA, JR.,

Respondent.

On Petition For Writ Of Certiorari To The United States Court Of Appeals For The Ninth Circuit

PETITION FOR WRIT OF CERTIORARI

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QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the federal court on habeas corpus review should conduct a *de novo* review rather than the deferential standard of review set forth in 28 U.S.C. § 2254(d), when a state court fails to address the state prisoner's federal constitutional claim and addresses only the state prisoner's state law claim.

2. Whether the upholding of a trial court's dismissal of a hold-out juror during jury deliberations, despite the juror's repeated insistence that she could deliberate and follow the law, is contrary to, or is an unreasonable application of, clearly established federal law.

LIST OF PARTIES

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PETITION FOR WRIT OF CERTIORARI

Petitioner respectfully requests that a writ of certiorari issue to review the judgment of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

OPINIONS BELOW

The memorandum opinion of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeal appears at Appendix ("App.") A to this Petition and is unpublished. The order denying Diaz' Petition for Rehearing and Rehearing En Banc appears at App. C and is unpublished. The opinion of the United States District Court appears at App. B and is unpublished.

JURISDICTION

The district court had jurisdiction of petitioner's habeas corpus petition under 28 U.S.C. § 2254. The court of appeals had jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(1) because the district court issued a timely Certificate of Appealability. The court of appeals entered judgment on February 27, 2007. App. A. A timely petition for rehearing and rehearing *en banc* was denied on April 19, 2007. App. C. The jurisdiction of this Court is invoked under 28 U.S.C. § 1254(1).

CONSTITUTIONAL AND STATUTORY PROVISIONS INVOLVED

28 U.S.C. § 2254(d):

(d) An application for a writ of habeas corpus on behalf of a person in custody pursuant to the judgment of a State court shall not be granted with respect to any claim that was adjudicated on the merits in State court proceedings unless the adjudication of the claim –

(1) resulted in a decision that was contrary to, or involved an unreasonable application of, clearly established Federal law, as determined by the Supreme Court of the United States; or

(2) resulted in a decision that was based on an unreasonable determination of the facts in light of the evidence presented in the State court proceeding.

Sixth Amendment to the United States Constitution:

> In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed. . . .

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

On July 28, 1998, a jury convicted Diaz of one count of attempted murder, one count of aggravated mayhem, and two counts of assault. The jury also found true the allegations of personal use of a firearm and infliction of great bodily injury.

The court sentenced Diaz to 37 years to life with the possibility of parole.

On March 21, 2001, the California Second District Court of Appeal affirmed Diaz' convictions in an unpublished decision.

On July 16, 2001, the California Supreme Court granted Diaz' Petition for Review and remanded the case for reconsideration in light of an intervening decision.

On January 28, 2002, the Second District Court of Appeal again affirmed Diaz' convictions, this time in a published decision. *People v. Diaz*, 95 Cal.App.4th 695 (2005).

On April 17, 2002, the California Supreme Court denied Diaz' Petition for Review based on the remand.

On October 7, 2002, this Court denied Diaz' Petition for a Writ of Certiorari.

On January 28, 2004, Diaz filed a timely First Amended Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus in the Federal District Court raising one claim: that the trial court violated his federal constitutional rights to a fair and impartial jury when it discharged a hold-out juror during jury deliberations, despite the juror's insistence that she could continue deliberating and could follow the law.

On December 9, 2004, following the filing of a return and a traverse, the Magistrate Judge issued a Report and Recommendation to deny and dismiss Diaz' habeas petition.

On December 22, 2004, Diaz filed objections to the Report and Recommendation.

On May 31, 2005, the District Court entered an order approving the Final Report and Recommendation and dismissing the petition.

On August 15, 2005, the District Court granted Diaz' request for a Certificate of Appealability.

On February 27, 2007, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed the denial of Diaz' habeas corpus petition in an unpublished memorandum decision. App. A.

On April 19, 2007, the Ninth Circuit denied Diaz' petition for rehearing with a suggestion for rehearing *en banc*. App. C.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND OF UNDERLYING CONVICTION

The Shooting

On July 14, 1998, at approximately 9:25 p.m., Beto Esparza was walking down the street with his girlfriend, Martha Siena, and her younger brother, Jose. As the three were in the middle of the street, a gray, four-door car pulled up next to them. Esparza saw three or four people in the car, one of whom appeared to be a female. A man got out of the car and asked Esparza, "Where are you from?" Esparza understood the man to have been asking for his gang affiliation. When Esparza replied "Clover," the man shot him. Esparza, who was shot in the leg four times, crawled behind a car.

Esparza did not identify the shooter. He could not describe the shooter's race, hair, size, build, or clothing.

The State's Theory: Diaz Did The Shooting

When the shooting began, Martha and Jose ran. Later, they returned and took Esparza to the hospital. Jose spoke to police at the hospital. He identified Keung "Sporty" Phu as the driver of the car. At trial, Jose testified that he also saw the shooter get out of the car and point a gun at Esparza. Yet, the prosecutor never asked Jose if Diaz was the shooter.

Instead, the state relied on out-of-court statements made by Martha. Martha was a member of the Clover gang. Martha believed that Diaz, whom she knew from her days at Los Angeles' Lincoln High School, was an Eastlake gang member. The Clover gang and the Eastlake gang were rivals. When the police spoke to Martha after the shooting, Martha said Diaz was the shooter. According to the police, Martha repeated her identification several days later. Yet, the state never called Martha to testify about her identification of Diaz. According to the police, Martha could not be found for trial. Thus, the jury heard what Martha said only through the police officers.

Despite having an identification from Martha and an address for Diaz, the police did not arrest Diaz for a month. Keung Phu also was arrested after Jose identified him as the driver of the car. Officer Eagleson interviewed Phu. Eagleson believed that Diaz was the shooter, and he wanted Phu to identify Diaz as the shooter. Eagleson also knew that Phu knew that Diaz had been arrested for the shooting. Eagleson told Phu that he was being charged with attempted murder. Phu was reluctant to speak. Eagleson confronted Phu with the fact that Phu had been identified as the driver. Eagleson denied that he told Phu that Phu would not be in trouble if he identified Diaz.

Instead, Eagleson claimed that Phu just volunteered that Diaz was the shooter. Phu was released from custody within hours.

Phu later testified at trial as a prosecution witness. He admitted that Eagleson had told him that the police believed Diaz was the shooter and that Phu would be charged with attempted murder if he did not cooperate. According to Phu, on the evening of July 14th, he was driving around with his girlfriend Jenny Vaca. They saw Diaz on the street and picked him up. Diaz then got out at an intersection and shot Esparza. When Diaz got back into the car, Phu drove to Diaz' girlfriend's house where he abandoned the car and the three went their separate ways. Phu cooperated fully at trial. In accord with his prior statement to police – and under a grant of immunity – Phu told the jury that Diaz was the shooter.

Jenny Vaca, who was with her boyfriend, Phu, at the time of his arrest, also talked to the police. She identified Phu as the father of her baby. She claimed that she and Phu had nothing to do with the shooting and stated that Diaz was the shooter.

Phu's and Vaca's stories were not entirely consistent. In Phu's statement to the police, he said that there was a fourth person – another female – in the car. At trial, Phu insisted that there were only three people in the car. When confronted with his prior statement to police, however, Phu claimed he made a mistake; there were really four people in the car. Vaca, however, denied that there ever was a fourth person in the car.

The stories from Phu and Vaca also were inconsistent with other eyewitness testimony. Both Phu and Vaca said that after the shooting they drove to Juana Contreras'

house with Diaz. Two witnesses contradicted them. Gerardo and Alicia Garibay were the parents of Juana Contreras, Diaz' girlfriend. Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Garibay liked Diaz or had any reason to testify for him. Mrs. Garibay knew that Diaz was the father of Juana's child but she chose not to have any contact with him. She only had seen him around the neighborhood about three times. Mr. Garibay did not know Diaz but had heard of him. Mr. Garibay told his daughter that he did not like Diaz and wanted her to stay away from him. Nevertheless, both Mr. and Mrs. Garibay independently provided testimony that was inconsistent with the testimony of immunized prosecution witness Phu and his girlfriend Vaca.

Mr. Garibay testified that on the evening of July 14, at approximately 9:00 p.m., a car drove onto his property, crashing into his garage. There were only two people in the car: a girl and a Chinese man both of whom got out of the car. He knew the girl as someone who lived a block away. When the Chinese man saw Mr. Garibay, the man lifted his shirt to reveal a gun. Mr. Garibay interpreted the gesture as a threat and did not call the police.

Mrs. Garibay also heard the crash. She went outside and saw two people in the car. She recognized Vaca because she had known Vaca since Vaca was a child. She also recognized the Chinese man as Keung Phu.

The Defense Theory: Diaz Was With Friends At The Movies At The Time Of The Shooting

The defense theory of the case was alibi. Three witnesses came forward to testify that Diaz was with friends at a movie at the time of the shooting. Juana Contreras testified that on the day of the shooting Diaz made plans

to go to the movies with her that evening. When she arrived at the Diaz home, Diaz, his sister Darlene, and their friend, Adrian, were waiting for her. At approximately 6:30 p.m., Diaz' mother, Yolanda, drove the foursome to the movie theater. Darlene worked at the Edwards movie theater in Alhambra and had passes to the film *Lethal Weapon 4*. When the movie was over, they called Yolanda to pick them up. Darlene and Yolanda each corroborated Juana's testimony. Darlene testified that she had passes to the film given to her by the theater (her) manager and that Diaz was at the theater watching *Lethal Weapon 4* with her at the time of the shooting. Yolanda testified she dropped the foursome at the theater and picked them up around 10:00 p.m.

THE DISMISSAL OF THE HOLD-OUT JUROR

The jury's task in this case was to determine whom to believe: (1) immunized Phu, his girlfriend Vaca, and the alleged pre-trial statements of gang arch rival Martha, or (2) Mr. and Mrs. Garibay and Diaz' three alibi witnesses, who could name the date, time, and place of the film that Diaz saw with them at the time of the shooting.

On July 9, 1999, the jury began deliberating late in the day. On the next day of deliberation, at 11:50 a.m. the trial court received a jury note indicating that "a juror refuses to deliberate further." The court decided to hold a hearing. The prosecutor asked if, after the inquiry, the court would simply "give another admonishment before it decides to do anything drastic." The court stated, "What I am going to do is hear what they have to say. My mind is towards whether it is an honest difference of opinion or

whether or not there is, in fact, a juror who is not deliberating."

The trial court did not at first speak to the accused juror. Instead, the court spoke to the jury foreperson, Juror 9. This was a man named Manny Medrano, who had been an assistant United States Attorney in the Central District of California for many years in the 1980's and who later became a local legal newscaster for KNBC Television in Los Angeles and then became NBC's national legal correspondent. The foreperson explained that the jury as a whole had discussed the case and that all 12 jurors had reached a position. According to the foreperson "everything was going fine until like the last 10 or 15 minutes when we realized this is where we were all positioned. And but when we had the difference, there was no discussing it further."

The foreperson suggested that Juror 5 "is intimidated by us needing to discuss her opinion and ours and she just feels ganged up on because she is by herself." The foreperson admitted that the jury would continuously "encourage" her; "everybody calmed down and backed off and just tried to ease the situation and then approach it again. . . ." The foreperson also admitted that up to this point, Juror 5 had discussed both the evidence and the law with the other jurors.

Outside the presence of the foreperson, the trial court indicated that the note was received at 11:50 a.m., "which means that in the course of an almost two-week trial one juror has reached a decision that she won't discuss with other persons." The court's statement was puzzling since the foreperson had told the court that "we were *all* positioned," and not just Juror 5. (Emphasis added.)

Next, Juror 5 was called into the courtroom to explain herself. Her position was simple: "I told them my opinion, the way I feel. That's my opinion." She assured the court that she was "discussing her opinion and the factual basis for it and the legal basis for it with the other jurors." She explained she was having only one difficulty: "they are like, you know, all bombarding me and I am just telling them the way that my belief. . . ." The court impatiently stopped her in mid-explanation, and directed her to the standard instructions on her duty to deliberate and how jurors should approach their task, and sent her back into the jury room.

The court was not satisfied, stating "it's kind of one of those borderline situations. . . ." The court then said it wanted to speak with some other jurors. Although previously urging caution against any drastic moves, the prosecution had no objection. Over defense counsel's objection, the court decided to speak with Juror 11, a former prosecutor. According to Juror 11, "it is our job to discuss the case and the facts and the law, but we are not being allowed to do that because of this juror." Although Juror 9 had indicated that Juror 5 deliberated "until like the last 10 or 15 minutes," the former prosecutor disagreed, telling the court that it had been at least an hour since the juror had stopped deliberating.

The trial court was not satisfied: "[B]ased on what he has just said, it seems very clear to me that she had completely ceased to discuss the case after possibly an hour and 10 minutes of deliberations. And that to me violates the deliberations rules and the jurors' duty of conduct." Defense counsel argued that "cases come to verdict all the time in a half hour, one hour, and sometimes people have nothing else to say about the case."

The court decided to hear from one more juror. Juror 1 believed Juror 5 had deliberated "to a certain point." According to Juror 1, the hold-out juror refused to discuss her opinion further "when she reaches a feeling that we are attacking her." Juror 1 concurred with the foreperson, explaining that the problem only began about 15 or 20 minutes earlier.

After Juror 1 left the courtroom, the prosecutor argued that Juror 5 was refusing to deliberate, but that the court had "to give her a little bit more time." The trial court agreed. The court again instructed the jurors as to their general duties and then dismissed them for the day to renew deliberations the next morning.

The next day, the trial court changed its mind. Having read a case which involved a juror who had indicated she had been intimidated by the other jurors and was not sure she could deliberate properly, the court began a second inquiry of Juror 5. The court asked Juror 5 if she still felt intimidated. The juror replied "no," explaining that her previous day had been difficult because her brother-in-law was very sick and had died. The juror insisted, however, that "I am doing better now." The court offered to excuse Juror 5 to attend the funeral. The juror declined, indicating the funeral was not until the end of the week. Obviously, the court was straining to get rid of Juror 5.

The court then asked Juror 5 if grieving had interfered with her deliberations. The juror explained that it had not because she did not find out her brother-in-law had died until she had returned home the previous day. The court then asked if her brother-in-law's illness had interfered with her ability to deliberate. The juror denied this was the cause of her problem. She explained, "[t]here

were a lot of problems in there. But, I think I can do my job, your Honor." The court asked if her brother-in-law's illness had been weighing on her mind. Juror 5 agreed that it had. The juror, however, disagreed when the court suggested that his death would make the juror feel worse. Juror 5 indicated that the death was a relief because her brother-in-law was no longer suffering.

Unable to cajole Juror 5 to disqualify herself or to take the bait and to admit her brother-in-law's death had precluded or would preclude her from deliberating, the court asked her if she could discuss the evidence and the law with the other jurors. Juror 5 was unequivocal: she said "Yes." Juror 5 then assured the court that she would "do my job like you told me . . . weigh the evidence and, you know, give my opinion." The juror said she knew she would be able to do her job "because I have got a lot of prayer and I know the Lord will bring me through." Twice more, the juror assured the court that she was ready to deliberate.

After the juror left the courtroom, the trial court declared it had found good cause to dismiss Juror 5. The court gave three reasons. First, the court found that the juror "had lied." According to the court, "[f]irst she said it was intimidating, and then she says she is emotionally upset because her brother-in-law was near death." The court believed Juror 5 should have volunteered the day before that she was concerned about the health of her brother-in-law. Defense counsel disagreed, pointing out that "[i]t did not affect her ability to come to a decision to analyze, to discuss the case." Second, the court found that the juror was relying on "divine intervention." The court believed "that divine intervention can help people, but I do think it is a rather short string to hang this on." Finally,

the court reiterated its view that the juror had failed to deliberate and felt intimidated. The court ignored the juror's repeated assurances that she no longer felt intimidated and was ready to deliberate.

The court dismissed Juror 5. The newly constituted jury convicted Diaz, who likely would not have been convicted had the court not improperly dismissed Juror 5.

REASONS FOR GRANTING THE PETITION

I.

THIS COURT SHOULD GRANT THIS PETITION TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE IMPORTANT FEDERAL QUESTION THAT SHOULD BE SETTLED BY THIS COURT, SUP. CT. RULE 10(C), A FEDERAL CONSTITUTIONAL CLAIM HAS BEEN "ADJUDICATED ON THE MERITS" FOR PURPOSES OF APPLYING 28 U.S.C. § 2254(d), IF A STATE PRISONER RAISES AN ISSUE UNDER *BOTH* STATE LAW AND FEDERAL CONSTITUTIONAL LAW, AND THE STATE COURT ISSUES A REASONED DECISION THAT ADDRESSES *ONLY* THE STATE LAW ASPECT OF THE CLAIM, AND DOES NOT CONSIDER OR MENTION THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT OR FEDERAL CASE LAW.

This case raises an issue that has divided the federal circuit courts of appeals, to wit, Has a state court adjudicated a claim on its merits when a state prisoner in state court raises a federal constitutional issue but the state court resolves the underlying issue solely with reference to state court law but with no discussion or even acknowledgment of federal constitutional principles? This issue is

critical because claims adjudicated on the merits are reviewed using the very deferential standard set forth in 28 U.S.C. § 2254(d), whereas claims not adjudicated on the merits are subject to *de novo* review. *Lavallee v. Coplan*, 374 F.3d 41, 43 (1st Cir. 2004).

In this case, in state court, Diaz argued that the trial court's dismissal of a hold-out juror during jury deliberations violated *both* state law, California Penal Code § 1089, and federal constitutional law, Sixth Amendment right to a fair and impartial jury trial. In the only written opinion issued by a state court, the California Second District Court of Appeal held that the trial court did not abuse its discretion in dismissing the juror. That court, in its written decision, did not mention the Sixth Amendment, the right to a fair and impartial jury, or any federal constitutional case law, and instead focused solely on Cal. Penal Code § 1089 and state court cases interpreting *only that* statute.

In federal court, in the habeas corpus proceedings, Diaz argued that the deferential review standard set forth in 28 U.S.C. § 2254(d)(1), did not apply to his case because the state court *never* "adjudicated on the merits" his federal constitutional claim. The District Court disagreed, citing *Lambert v. Blodgett*, 393 F.3d 943, 966 (9th Cir. 2004), for the proposition that the phrase "adjudicated on the merits" means simply that the state court denied a claim on substantive rather than procedural grounds. But "adjudicated on the merits" for the federal purpose must be understood to mean that "*the federal claims were adjudicated on the merits.*" The District Court went on to conclude that, since the state court decided Diaz' dismissed juror claim on the merits, albeit solely and only on

the state law merits, it fell within the meaning of "adjudicated on the merits." This was clearly mistaken.

On appeal, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals agreed, although for a slightly different reason. That Court held that in his state court pleadings Diaz listed various standards for juror dismissal, under both California and federal law, but did not differentiate those standards into two distinct arguments. Therefore, the Ninth Circuit held, the state court denial of the juror dismissal claim was an *implicit* adjudication of Diaz' Sixth Amendment claim, even if the state court never mentioned that specific aspect of the claim. But Diaz' failure to make two, distinct arguments cannot serve as a basis for the state court ignoring and not mentioning the federal claim as part of its disposition. The state court *explicitly* failed to address Diaz' federal claim, and therefore, it did not address that claim.

As Diaz explains, the District Court inappropriately mixed together several different aspects of the meaning of "adjudicated on the merits." Diaz acknowledges that the Ninth Circuit, as well as other circuits have held that "adjudicated on the merits" means that a claim was decided on substantive grounds, and not on procedural grounds. Diaz does not quibble with that broad distinction. *See e.g. Muth v. Frank*, 412 F.3d 808, 815 (7th Cir. 2005). However, that distinction does not provide more specific guidance in the situation presented here in which an issue is decided on substantive grounds, but only on state law substantive grounds, with no acknowledgment or discussion of federal constitutional substantive grounds. It is at this level of specificity that the Ninth Circuit in this case has parted company with other cases in its own circuit as well as with other circuits. Diaz' federal claim never was decided.

In part, the various circuits have treated non-specific merit-determinations two different ways. First, if there is no reasoned state court decision explaining the denial of a federal constitutional issue, such as when the California Supreme Court issues a "postcard denial" of a state habeas petition ***and*** there has been no lower court reasoned decision on the same issue in the same case, then the federal court in habeas corpus proceedings conducts an independent review to determine whether the state court clearly erred in its application of controlling federal law.[1] *See e.g. Delgado v. Lewis*, 223 F.3d 976, 982 (9th Cir. 2000). Although the federal court conducts an independent review of the record, it still defers to the ultimate state court ruling. *Pirtle v. Morgan*, 313 F.3d 1160, 1167 (9th Cir. 2002).

On the other hand, if an examination of the state court decision reveals that the state court never actually reached the merits of a specific federal constitutional error but otherwise issued a reasoned decision addressing other claims, including a state law claim related to the federal constitutional claim, then there is no ultimate state court ruling to which the federal court must defer and, instead, the federal court conducts its own *de novo* review. *Ibid.*; *Appel v. Horn*, 250 F.3d 203, 210 (3d Cir. 2001) ("[W]hen, although properly preserved by the defendant, the state court has not reached the merits of a claim thereafter presented to a federal habeas court, the

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[1] Although the California Supreme Court issued a postcard denial in Diaz' case, the relevant state court opinion is the reasoned decision by the Second District Court of Appeal. *Ylst v. Nunnemaker*, 501 U.S. 797, 803, 111 S.Ct. 2590, 115 L.Ed.2d 706 (1991) (If the highest state court does not explain the reason for denying a claim, the federal court looks back to the last reasoned state court decision).

deferential standards provided by AEDPA ... do not apply"); *Fortini v. Murphy*, 257 F.3d 39, 47 (1st Cir. 2001) (If the state court never addressed the federal constitutional claim, then that claim was not adjudicated on the merits); *Weeks v. Angelone*, 176 F.3d 249, 258 (4th Cir. 1999), *aff'd*, 528 U.S. 225, 120 S.Ct. 727, 145 L.Ed.2d 727 (2000) ("When a petitioner has properly presented a claim to the state court but the state court has not adjudicated the claim on the merits, however, our review of questions of law and mixed questions of law and fact is de novo"); *Morris v. Burnett*, 319 F.3d 1254, 1267 (10th Cir. 2003) ("When the state court addresses the great bulk of the issues raised by the petitioner's brief in that court but omits to address a particular claim, we have inferred that the claim was not decided 'on the merits' in the state court").

This Court should grant this petition for certiorari to provide guidance to the lower courts on how to interpret "adjudicated on the merits" in a situation such as this.

This issue is of major importance in the litigation of federal habeas corpus petitions. An initial inquiry for a federal court reviewing a habeas claim is whether the claim was "adjudicated on the merits" because only claims adjudicated on the merits fall within the scope of deferential review set forth in 28 U.S.C. § 2254(d). If a claim was not adjudicated on the merits, then the federal court applies the pre-AEDPA standard of review. That is, the federal court provides *de novo* review of questions of law and mixed questions of law and fact. Because the level of review often is determinative of a habeas petition, this Court should grant this petition and address this issue of fundamental importance to habeas corpus litigation.

II.

THIS COURT SHOULD GRANT THE PETITION TO DEVELOP THE STANDARD FOR THE IMPORTANT FEDERAL QUESTION THAT SHOULD BE SETTLED BY THIS COURT, SUP. CT. RULE 10(C), FOR WHAT CONSTITUTES A STATE COURT'S OBJECTIVELY UNREASONABLE DECISION IN A FEDERAL HABEAS PROCEEDING INVOLVING THE DISMISSAL OF A HOLD-OUT JUROR.

Diaz has raised the issue of whether the trial court violated his federal Sixth Amendment right to a fair and impartial jury when it continued to interrogate deliberating jurors, even after learning that the root of the jurors' problems was disagreement on how to resolve the case. Assuming for the sake of argument that the deferential standard set forth in 28 U.S.C. § 2254(d) applies to this case, then Diaz must show that the state court's resolution of his denial of a fair and impartial jury claim "resulted in a decision that was contrary to, or involved an unreasonable application of, clearly established Federal law, as determined by the Supreme Court of the United States." Here, Diaz met this test.

A criminal defendant's Sixth Amendment right to a fair and impartial jury is violated when a juror who agrees to consider the facts and apply the law as instructed by the court is, nevertheless, discharged for cause. *Adams v. Texas*, 448 U.S. 38, 45, 100 S.Ct. 2521, 65 L.Ed.2d 581 (1980). Likewise, "a State may not entrust the determination of whether a man is innocent or guilty to a tribunal 'organized to convict.'" *Witherspoon v. Illinois*, 391 U.S. 510, 521, 88 S.Ct. 1770, 20 L.Ed.2d 776 (1968) (citing *Fay v. New York*, 332 U.S. 261, 294, 67 S.Ct. 1613, 91 L.Ed. 2043 [1947]). Thus, a trial court may not discharge a

hold-out juror who represents that she will abide by all court rules, because doing so leads to a jury organized to convict:

> [A] court may not dismiss a juror during deliberations if the request for discharge stems from doubts the juror harbors about the sufficiency of the government's evidence. . . . If a court could discharge a juror on the basis of such a request, then the right to a unanimous verdict would be illusory. A discharge of this kind would enable the government to obtain a conviction even though a member of the jury that began deliberations thought that the government had failed to prove its case. Such a result is unacceptable under the Constitution. Thus, when a request for dismissal stems from the juror's view of the sufficiency of the evidence that the government offered at trial, a judge may not discharge the juror: the judge must either declare a mistrial or send the juror back to deliberations with instructions that the jury continue to attempt to reach agreement.

United States v. Brown, 823 F.2d 591, 596 (D.C. Cir. 1987). The tension between a court's obligation to inquire into possible juror misconduct during jury deliberations must be carefully balanced with the equally, if not more, important task of safeguarding the secrecy of jury deliberations. *United States v. Thomas*, 116 F.3d 606, 618 (2d Cir. 1997).

This case squarely confronts this thorny problem. This Court should grant review to provide the lower courts with further guidance as to what is an objectively unreasonable interference with a criminal defendant's right to a fair and impartial jury, when the state trial court is confronted

with a hold-out juror who professes to be willing and able to deliberate fairly.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons set forth above, certiorari should be granted.

Dated: July 16, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

STEPHEN YAGMAN
Counsel of Record

YAGMAN & YAGMAN
& REICHMANN

MARION R. YAGMAN
JOSEPH REICHMANN

APPENDIX A

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS

FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT

DAVID ANGEL DIAZ, Petitioner-Appellant, v. EDWARD S. ALAMEIDA, JR., Defendant-Appellee.	No. 05-56257 D.C. No. CV-03-08378-DDP MEMORANDUM*

Appeal from the United States District Court
for the Central District of California
Dean D. Pregerson, District Judge, Presiding

Argued and Submitted October 17, 2006
Pasadena, California

(Filed Feb. 27, 2007)

Before: JOHN R. GIBSON,** FISHER, and CALLAHAN, Circuit Judges.

David Angel Diaz appeals the district court's order denying his petition for a writ of habeas corpus pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2254.[1] Diaz seeks to invalidate his state

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* This disposition is not appropriate for publication and is not precedent except as provided by 9th Cir. R. 36-3.

** The Honorable John R. Gibson, Senior Circuit Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit, sitting by designation.

[1] The actual order dismissed with prejudice Diaz's petition for writ of habeas corpus. For our purposes, this is a distinction without a difference.

convictions for attempted murder, aggravated mayhem, assault by means likely to produce great bodily injury, and assault with a semiautomatic weapon. Diaz contends that the district court erred in its standard of review because the California Court of Appeal never adjudicated his Sixth Amendment claim. He also argues that the judge's dismissal of a lone holdout juror violated his Sixth Amendment right to a jury trial. We affirm.

I.

We review the district court's denial of a writ of habeas corpus de novo. *Clark v. Murphy,* 331 F.3d 1062, 1067 (9th Cir. 2003). Because Diaz's petition was filed after April 24, 1996, the extent of review is governed by the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 ("AEDPA"), Pub. L. No. 104-132, 110 Stat. 1214. Diaz argues that in his appeal to the California Court of Appeal, he raised two distinct claims, a Sixth Amendment claim as well as a separate California Penal Code § 1089 claim. According to Diaz, the Court of Appeal fully addressed the § 1089 claim, but failed to resolve the separate Sixth Amendment claim. Diaz maintains that the court's failure to address the Sixth Amendment claim renders inapplicable AEDPA's deferential standard of review. *See Pirtle v. Morgan,* 313 F.3d 1160, 1167 (9th Cir. 2002) (holding that de novo review is appropriate where "a state court has not reached the merits of a properly raised issue").

The record belies Diaz's argument. In his appeal, Diaz cited the Sixth Amendment, federal law, and California state law in arguing that the trial court erred in dismissing Juror No. 5, without making any distinction between a § 1089 claim and a Sixth Amendment claim.

While Diaz listed various standards for juror dismissal under both California and federal law, he did so in the context of a single argument that the trial court's action was erroneous. The California Court of Appeal's decision that the trial court's actions were not erroneous therefore constituted an implicit adjudication of Diaz's Sixth Amendment claim, despite the court's failure to mention the Sixth Amendment or Supreme Court precedent. *See Early v. Packer,* 537 U.S. 3, 8 (2002); *Lambert v. Blodgett,* 393 F.3d 943, 969 (9th Cir. 2004). We conclude that the decision by the California Court of Appeal constituted a decision on the merits of Diaz's Sixth Amendment claim as required under AEDPA.

II.

Diaz argues that the state court's removal of Juror No. 5 constituted a violation of his Sixth Amendment right to a fair and impartial jury. The Sixth Amendment requires the preservation of the "essential feature" of the jury system. *See Williams v. Florida,* 399 U.S. 78, 100 (1970). There is ample evidence to support the trial judge's determination that Juror No. 5 was emotionally unable to continue with deliberations. The trial judge spoke on two separate occasions with Juror No. 5 before stating that she had determined that Juror No. 5 appeared to be too upset to continue effectively with deliberations. A trial court's findings regarding juror fitness are entitled to special deference because trial courts are "in a superior position to observe [jurors'] physical appearance and demeanor and thereby to determine [their] ability to continue deliberating." *Perez v. Marshall,* 119 F.3d 1422, 1427 (9th Cir. 1997). The trial court also spoke with three other jurors, all of whom agreed that Juror No. 5 was unwilling to

deliberate fully with the other jurors. Diaz has not presented clear and convincing evidence to overcome the presumption of correctness that we must accord the trial court's factual determination of juror fitness. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 2254(e)(1). Accordingly, we conclude that the state court's determination that Juror No. 5 was unable to continue with deliberations was not an unreasonable determination of the facts. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 2254(d)(2).

Removal pursuant to § 1089 is constitutional because California's statute "preserve[s] the 'essential feature' of the jury required by the Sixth and Fourteenth Amendments." *Miller v. Stagner,* 757 F.2d 988, 995 (9th Cir. 1985). In light of *Miller* and the lack of directly controlling Supreme Court precedent on this issue, the California Court of Appeal's conclusion that the trial court properly discharged Juror No. 5 was not contrary to, nor an unreasonable application of, clearly established federal law. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 2254(d)(1); *Carey v. Musladin,* 127 S.Ct. 649, 654 (2006).

AFFIRMED.

APPENDIX B

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

DAVID ANGEL DIAZ, Petitioner, v. EDWARD ALAMEIDA, JR., Warden, Respondent.	Case No. CV 03-8378-DDP (JTL) **JUDGMENT** (Filed May 27, 2005)

In accordance with the Final Report and Recommendation of the United States Magistrate Judge filed concurrently herewith,

IT IS HEREBY ADJUDGED that the Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus in this action is dismissed with prejudice.

DATED: 5-25-05

/s/ Dean Pregerson
DEAN D. PREGERSON
UNITED STATES
DISTRICT JUDGE

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

DAVID ANGEL DIAZ, Petitioner, v. EDWARD ALAMEIDA, JR., Warden, Respondent.	) Case No.) CV 03-8378-DDP (JTL))) ORDER ADOPTING FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE)) (Filed May 27, 2005)

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636, the Court has reviewed the Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus, all the records and files herein, and the Report and Recommendation of the United States Magistrate Judge, and the Objections thereto. Having made a *de novo* determination of those portions of the Report and Recommendation to which objection has been made, the Court concurs with and adopts the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Magistrate Judge as set forth in the Final Report and Recommendation.

IT IS ORDERED that judgment be entered dismissing the Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus with prejudice.

DATED: 5-25-05

/s/ Dean Pregerson
DEAN D. PREGERSON
UNITED STATES
DISTRICT JUDGE

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

DAVID ANGEL DIAZ, Petitioner, v. EDWARD ALAMEIDA, JR., Warden, Respondent.	Case No. CV 03-8378-DDP (JTL) FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE (Filed Mar. 1, 2005)

The Court submits this Final Report and Recommendation to the Honorable Dean D. Pregerson, United States District Judge, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. Section 636 and General Order 01-13 of the United States District Court for the Central District of California.

PROCEEDINGS

On October 6, 2003, David Angel Diaz ("Petitioner") filed a Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus by a Person in State Custody ("Petition"). Thereafter, on April 7, 2004, Edward Alameida, Jr. ("Respondent") filed a Return to the Petition ("Return"). On September 1, 2004, Petitioner filed a Traverse to Return ("Traverse"). On December 9, 2004, the Court issued a Report and Recommendation, recommending that the district court dismiss the Petition with prejudice. Thereafter, on December 22, 2004, Petitioner filed his Objections to the Court's Report and Recommendation.

This matter is now ready for decision.

BACKGROUND

On July 14, 1999, a Los Angeles County Superior Court jury convicted Petitioner of attempted murder (Cal. Penal Code §§ 664, 187(a)), aggravated mayhem (Cal. Penal Code § 205), and two counts of assault (Cal. Penal Code § 245). (Clerk's Transcript ["CT"] at 150-53). With respect to the attempted murder and aggravated mayhem counts, the jury found that Petitioner personally and intentionally discharged a firearm within the meaning of Cal. Penal Code § 12022.53(d). (CT at 150-51). With respect to one of the assault counts, the jury found that Petitioner personally used a firearm (Cal. Penal Code § 12022.5(a)(1)). (CT at 153). With respect to all counts, the jury found that Petitioner personally inflicted great bodily injury within the meaning of Cal. Penal Code § 12022.7(a). (CT at 150-53). On November 18, 1999, the trial court sentenced Petitioner to prison for a term of thirty-seven (37) years to life. (CT at 203-09).

Petitioner appealed his conviction to the California Court of Appeal. On January 28, 2002, the court of appeal affirmed Petitioner's conviction. (Respondent's Lodgment No. 2). Petitioner then filed a petition for review in the California Supreme Court. On November 12, 2003, the California Supreme Court granted the petition, vacated the court of appeal's opinion and remanded the case for reconsideration in light of *People v. Cleveland,* 25 Cal. 4th 466 (2001). (Respondent's Lodgment No. 4). On remand, the court of appeal again affirmed Petitioner's conviction. (Respondent's Lodgment No. 5). Petitioner filed another petition for review in the California Supreme Court, which was denied on April 17, 2002. (Respondent's Lodgment No. 7). Petitioner then filed a petition for writ of certiorari in

the United States Supreme Court, which was denied on June 8, 2004. (Respondent's Lodgment No. 9).

Petitioner then filed this Petition.

SUMMARY OF THE EVIDENCE PRESENTED AT TRIAL

Petitioner does not contest the sufficiency of the evidence to support his Conviction. The Court, therefore, takes the following summary from the California Court of Appeal Opinion:

1. *Prosecution evidence*

K.P. and [Petitioner] were members of the Eastlake Gang. The Eastlake Gang and the Clover Gang, bitter rivals, were at war. On the night of July 14, 1998, K.P. was driving in his car with his girlfriend, Jeanette V. K.P. saw [Petitioner] in the street and picked him up. Neither K.P. nor Jeanette knew [Petitioner] had a gun.

Remberto P. a member of the Eastside Clover Gang, was walking across the intersection of Griffin Avenue and Manitou Street with his girlfriend, Martha S., and her 13-year-old brother. When K.P. came to a stop sign at the intersection of Griffin and Manitou, [Petitioner] got out of the car saying something like, "I am going to waste him," or "I am going to blast him." [Petitioner] walked up to Remberto and asked, "Where are you from?" Remberto knew [Petitioner] was asking what gang he was from and he replied, "I am from Clover." [Petitioner] pulled out a handgun, shot at Remberto numerous times, and then got back into K.P.'s car. Remberto was hit twice in the leg, the bullets

destroying the femoral artery of his lower leg, and shattering his fibula.

K.P. drove to the home of [Petitioner's] girlfriend, Juana C., and parked at the rear of the property. K.P., Jeanette, and [Petitioner] got out of the car. K.P. and Jeanette walked away together, and [Petitioner] walked away in a different direction. K.P. and Jeanette retrieved the car early the next morning.

Police Officer Armando Rodriguez responded to the scene and spoke with Remberto's girlfriend, Martha. Martha told Rodriguez she recognized the gunman, whom he knew by his moniker "Drifter," and that Drifter was a member of the Eastlake Gang. Officer Juan Parga spoke to Martha a little later that same night. Martha told Parga she knew the gunman from high school, that his name was David, that he was also known as Drifter, and that he was from the Eastlake Gang. Martha identified a photograph of [Petitioner] as the gunman.

Officer Jose Ramirez interviewed Martha about a week after the shooting. Martha told him she knew the person who shot Remberto, and that she had gone to junior high school and high school with the gunman. Martha showed Ramirez an eighth grade year book and pointed out a photograph of [Petitioner].

2. *Defense Evidence*

[Petitioner's] sister testified that she, [Petitioner] and his girlfriend Juana were at the movies on the night Remberto was shot.

Juana's father testified he was cleaning up his backyard sometime after 9:00 p.m. on July 14, 1998, when a

small car crashed into his garage. A girl and a Chinese man got out of the car. The man pulled up his shirt and displayed a gun. Then the two of them jumped over the back fence. Juana's mother, who was inside the house, looked out the window when she heard the crash and she saw Jeanette and a man get out of the car.

(Respondent's Lodgment No. 5, Court of Appeal Opinion at 2-4).

PETITIONER'S CLAIM

The trial court violated Petitioner's rights to a fair trial by a jury and due process by removing a juror after the jury had begun deliberating.

STANDARD OF REVIEW

The Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 ("Act") governs the Court's consideration of Petitioner's cognizable federal claims. 28 U.S.C. Section 2254(d), as amended by the Act, states:

> An application for a writ of habeas corpus on behalf of a person in custody pursuant to the judgment of a State court shall not be granted with respect to any claim that was adjudicated on the merits in State court proceedings unless the adjudication of the claim – (1) resulted in a decision that was contrary to, or involved an unreasonable application of, clearly established Federal law, as determined by the Supreme Court of the United States; or (2) resulted in a decision that was based on an unreasonable determination of the facts in light of the evidence presented in the State court proceeding.

In *Williams v. Taylor,* 529 U.S. 362, 405-06 (2000), the United States Supreme Court held that a state court's decision can be contrary to federal law either 1) if it fails to apply the correct controlling authority, or 2) if it applies the controlling authority to a case involving facts materially indistinguishable from those in a controlling case, but nonetheless reaches a different result. A state court's decision can involve an unreasonable application of federal law if it either 1) correctly identifies the governing rule but then applies it to a new set of facts in a way that is objectively unreasonable, or 2) extends or fails to extend a clearly established legal principle to a new context in a way that is objectively unreasonable. *Williams,* 529 U.S. at 407-08. The Supreme Court has admonished courts against equating the term "unreasonable application" with "clear error": "These two standards . . . are not the same. The gloss of clear error fails to give proper deference to state courts by conflating error (even clear error) with unreasonableness." *Lockyer v. Andrade,* 538 U.S. 63, 75 (2003). Instead, in this context, habeas relief may issue only if the state court unreasonably applied firmly established federal law. *Id.*

In this case, the California Court of Appeal issued a reasoned decision explaining why the state court denied Petitioner's current claim for relief. The Court, therefore, accords substantial deference to that decision and decides only whether it was contrary to, or resulted in an unreasonable application of, firmly established law.[1] *Andrade,* 538 U.S. at 75.

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[1] Petitioner argues that the AEDPA does not apply in this case. Petitioner points out that the California Court of Appeal resolved his juror dismissal claim as a matter of state law, but it did not specifically

(Continued on following page)

The Court rejects this argument. A claim is adjudicated on the merits for purposes of § 2254(d) when the state court disposes of the claim on substantive grounds as opposed to procedural grounds. *See, Lambert v. Blodgett,* 393 F.3d 943, 969 (9th Cir. 2004) (A state court "has 'adjudicated' a petitioner's constitutional claim 'on the merits' for purposes of § 2254(d) when it has decided the petitioner's right to post conviction relief on the basis of the substance of the constitutional claim advanced, rather than denying the claim on the basis of a procedural or other rule precluding state court review of the merits."); *Neal v. Puckett,* 239 F.3d 583, 696 (5th Cir. 2001) (defining adjudication on the merits as referring "to whether a court's disposition of the case was substantive as opposed to procedural."); *Aycox v. Lytle,* 196 F.3d 1174, 1177 (10th Cir. 1999) (holding that an "adjudication on the merits" is a substantive, rather than a procedural, resolution of a federal claim). Here, the California Court of Appeal clearly addressed Petitioner's juror dismissal claim on the merits, rather than dismissing it on a procedural ground. Although the state court applied the standard set forth in Cal. Penal Code § 1089 for the discharge and substitution of jurors, the Ninth Circuit has held that this procedure preserves the "essential feature" of the jury required by the Sixth and Fourteenth Amendments. *See Miller v. Stagner,* 757 F.2d 988, 995 (9th Cir.), *amended,* 768 F.2d 1090 (9th Cir. 1985). As such, the state court adjudicated Petitioner's claim on the merits, and the AEDPA standard applies. The state court's failure to cite or discuss federal case law is

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address the argument as a Sixth Amendment claim. Thus, Petitioner concludes that his Sixth Amendment claim has not been adjudicated on the merits, and the AEDPA standard does not apply. (Petition at 18).

irrelevant. *See Mitchell v. Esparza,* 540 U.S. 12, 16 (2003) ("a state court need not even be aware of our precedents, so long as neither the reasoning nor the result of the state-court decision contradicts them"); *Early v. Packer,* 537 U.S. 3, 8 (2002) ("[T]he Ninth Circuit observed that the state court 'failed to cite . . . any federal law, . . . If this meant to suggest that such citation was required [under the AEDPA], it was in error."); *Miller v. Mullin,* 354 F.3d 1288, 1292-93 (10th Cir. 2004) ("we apply [the AEDPA] standard notwithstanding the [state court's] failure to cite or discuss federal case law."); *Rompilla v. Horn,* 355 F.3d 233, 247-48 (3rd Cir. 2004) (where adjudication was on the merits despite state court's failure to cite or apply federal law).

Furthermore, the Court notes the California Supreme Court's denial of Petitioner's petition for review without comment or citation also constituted a denial on the merits of all of Petitioner's claims. *See Hunter v. Aispuro,* 982 F.2d 344, 347-48 (9th Cir. 1992) (holding that the California supreme Court's denial of petitioner's state habeas petition without comment or citation was a denial on the merits of petitioner's constitutional claims); *see also Harris v. Superior Court,* 500 F.2d 1124, 1127-29 (9th Cir. 1974) (same).

DISCUSSION

THE TRIAL COURT PROPERLY REMOVED JUROR NO. 5 FROM THE JURY

In his sole claim for relief, Petitioner alleges that the trial court erred in removing a juror from the jury after it had begun deliberation. Petitioner contends that the trial court's alleged error violated Petitioner's rights to due process and to an impartial jury.

After two hours of deliberation, the jury sent the trial judge a note, stating:

> A juror refuses to deliberate further. We believe that this violates instruction number 17.41.1. We want further guidance from the court.

(Reporter's Transcript ["RT"] at 797). The trial court had the jury foreperson brought into the courtroom. (RT at 798-99). The foreperson told the trial court that Juror No. 5 was "intimidated by us needing to discuss her opinion and ours and she just feels ganged up on because she is by herself" and that "her position and her attitude is, this is how I feel, and there is nothing to discuss." (RT at 800). According to the foreperson, "[e]verything was going fine until like the last 10 or 15 minutes when we realized that this is where we all were positioned. And but, when we had the difference, there was no discussing it further." (RT at 801). At that point, Juror No. 5 stopped participating in deliberations, stating only: "This is how I feel." (RT at 801). Though the other jurors told her not to "take this personally" and that they were not ganging up on her, Juror No. 5 felt "like it is [personal]" and was "completely intimidated." (RT at 801). "We tried, like, two or three times to encourage her. And everybody calmed down and backed off and just tried to ease the situation and then approach it again, and it was just – that's it . . . You can tell by her demeanor and she is not responding and there is nothing to discuss." (RT at 802).

The trial court then had Juror No. 5 brought into the courtroom and asked: "Are you having difficulty in the jury room?" (RT at 804). Juror No. 5 responded "I think I am" and started to cry. (*Id.*). She said that she had been discussing her opinion with the other jurors, "[b]ut they are like, you know, all bombarding me and I am just

telling them the way that my belief." (RT at 804). The trial court reminded her to "decide the case for yourself, but you should do so only after discussing the evidence and the instructions with the other jurors," and that "it is rarely helpful for a juror at the beginning of deliberations to express an emphatic opinion on the case or to announce a determination to stand for a certain verdict." (RT at 805-06). The trial court then sent Juror No. 5 back into the jury deliberation room. (RT at 805-06).

Next, the trial court spoke with Juror No. 11. Juror No. 11 stated that, while Juror No. 5 initially participated in deliberations, she had "then since ceased." (RT at 808). According to Juror No. 11, the other jurors wanted to continue discussions, but were "not being allowed to do so because of this attitude that [Juror No. 5] has now taken on." (RT at 808-10). They tried to discuss the case among themselves in an effort to try to get her into discussions again." (RT at 810). But Juror No. 5 "just flat out refuses to," saying: "That's it. I am not going to discuss it anymore." (RT at 808-09, 812). She complained that she was "picked upon" and that the other jurors were "ganging up" on her. (RT at 811).

The trial court then questioned Juror No. 1. (RT at 814). Juror No. 1 told the trial court that, while Juror No. 5 initially deliberated, she subsequently stopped because she felt the other jurors were "attacking" her. (RT at 815). Juror No. 1 stated that he did not believe Juror No. 5 was being attacked. (*Id.*). The other jurors asked Juror No. 5 to "explain her thoughts and why she feels that way" so that they could "perhaps . . . understand the reasons why she is feeling the way she is feeling." (RT at 816).

The, trial court then had the entire jury brought into the courtroom. (RT at 817-18). The court reread the portions of the instructions relating to juror duties and excused the jurors for the day. (RT at 818-20).

The next morning, the trial court brought in Juror No. 5 for further questioning: "Yesterday you said you felt intimidated by the other jurors and, in fact, it was something that brought you to tears. Do you still feel intimidated by the other jurors?" Juror No. 5 answered: "No, your Honor. I was going through a lot. My brother-in-law was very sick and he died yesterday. . . . It has been kind of hard for me, but I am doing better now, your Honor." (RT at 825). The trial court then asked if this personal loss would prevent her from deliberating because "[i]t sounded like yesterday that interfered with it." (*Id.*). Juror No. 5 responded: "Well, I didn't know that he had died until I got home." (*Id.*). She said that his sickness had been bothering her the day before, but when the trial court asked if she thought that was why she had been having problems in the jury room, she said: "No. There was a lot of problems in there. But, I think I can do my job, your Honor." (RT at 826). The trial court further asked:

> Q: Okay. What has changed to make you think so?
>
> A: I made up my mind that I am a juror and I have to do my job and, like you told me, weigh the evidence, and I am going to do my job.
>
> Q: Okay. . . . You said yesterday that it was your brother's sickness that had a lot weighing on your mind, right?

A: Yes.

Q: So now, today, you found out that he has passed away. Don't you think that is going to affect you even worse?

A: No, your Honor, because he is not suffering anymore. He was suffering a lot; he had bilateral kidney failure and he was on the machine. So he is not suffering anymore.

. . .

Q: Okay. But, what has changed since yesterday to make you feel like you are not going to be intimidated?

A: Because I have got a lot of prayer and I know the Lord will bring me through. Your Honor, that's how I feel. That's my belief.

(RT at 826-27).

After Juror No. 5 left the courtroom, the trial court told counsel that it questioned whether Juror No. 5 was being candid: "She said she was intimidated by the others. And she said that in that case she hadn't discussed the case with [the] others, and yesterday she said nothing about the fact that her brother-in-law was near death and that was prohibiting her from being able to make a determination in regards to this case. . . . And I find it very interesting that she didn't have anything to say about that yesterday. It causes me to question her candor and reliability." (RT at 831-32). The trial court then concluded that there was "good cause" to excuse Juror No 5.:

> It almost seems to me that there is good cause on just a number of levels. First of all, the juror has lied about what was a problem for her. First she

said it was intimidating, and then she says she is emotionally upset because her brother-in-law was near death. Then she finds out overnight that he has, in fact, passed away. And I question whether or not that death and the loss of that isn't going to continue to interfere with her ability to make decisions in this case, in light of what happened yesterday, and how she wasn't forthcoming.

. . .

It seems to me that all the jurors indicated that she did fail to perform her duty to deliberate. All of the jurors indicated that she talked for a while and then stopped, and refused to talk anymore with the other jurors.

. . .

I have had an opportunity to observe all three of the jurors – excuse me – four jurors that I have made inquiry of and see their facial expressions, the tone and manner of the way that they discussed things. And it's my call that I think that Juror No. 5 is emotionally distraught and couldn't say it yesterday, and still looked emotionally distraught today, and I find it difficult that she didn't fully disclose, and I do find there is good cause under those three situations: failure to deliberate, the fact of feeling intimidated, and also the fact that apparently her mind wanders and makes her recalcitrant to deliberate when she feels someone is in ill health by her admission today.

So . . . I am going to determine there is good cause to excuse Juror No. 5.

(RT at 832-37).

At the hearing on Petitioner's motion for a new trial, the trial court further explained its decision to excuse Juror No. 5:

> [A]ll [three jurors] indicated that after a relatively short period, be it an hour or two hours, after a 10-day trial, that that juror was no longer taking part in the decisions – or discussing the facts of that case.
>
> And when she was first confronted with that decision, she said that she was deliberating, although she felt intimidated, and that she was trying to do that. But the next day she basically comes in and contradicts her story and says that, you know, the difficulty in her deliberations yesterday were due to the fact that she was upset, and understandably so, at the life-threatening illness that she had been worried about with her brother-in-law.
>
> And so, that wasn't disclosed the first day . . .

(RT at 895). In sum, the trial court stated that its decision was based "on [Juror No. 5's] failure to deliberate, failure to be honest about what was taking place, her feeling intimidated, and the difficulties that one would reasonably have as a result of that." (RT at 895).

Petitioner now contends that the trial court erred in excusing Juror No. 5. (Petition at 15-18). According to Petitioner, Juror No. 5 was willing to deliberate but only stopped when the other jurors began "bombarding" her. (Petition at 16). Petitioner, therefore, argues that the trial court should have allowed Juror No. 5 to remain on the jury. Moreover, Petitioner claims that Juror No. 5 was the "lone juror holding out for acquittal." (Petition at 16). Thus, Petitioner concludes that removing Juror No. 5 from

the jury deprived Petitioner of his right to due process and to a fair trial by an impartial jury. (Petition at 17-18). As discussed below, these arguments lack merit.

"The Sixth Amendment right to jury trial guarantees to the criminally accused a fair trial by a panel of impartial, indifferent jurors. Even if 'only one juror is unduly biased or prejudiced,' the defendant is denied his constitutional right to an impartial jury." *Mach v. Stewart,* 137 F.3d 630, 633 (9th Cir. 1978) (internal citations and quotations omitted). "Due process requires that the defendant be tried by a jury capable and willing to decide the case solely on the evidence before it." *Id.* (*citing Smith v. Phillips,* 455 U.S. 209, 217 (1982)).

California Penal Code Section 1089 provides for the discharge and substitution of jurors:

> If at any time, whether before or after the final submission of the case to the jury, a juror dies or becomes ill, or upon other good cause shown to the court is found to be unable to perform his or her duty, or if a juror requests a discharge and good cause appears therefor, the court may order the juror to be discharged and draw the name of an alternate, who shall then take a place in the jury box, and be subject to the same rules and regulations as though the alternate juror had been selected as one of the original jurors.

Cal. Penal Code § 1089. This procedure, which the trial court followed here, preserves the "essential feature" of the jury required by the Sixth and Fourteenth Amendments. *See Miller v. Starner,* 757 F.2d 988, 995 (9th Cir.) ("The California substitution procedure followed by the trial court preserved the 'essential feature' of the jury required by the Sixth and Fourteenth Amendments."), *amended,*

768 F.2d 1090 (9th Cir. 1985). The Court, therefore, need only decide whether Section 1089's application in the circumstances of this case violated Petitioner's Sixth Amendment rights. *See Perez v. Marshall*, 119 F.2d 1422, 1425 (9th Cir. 1997) ("Because we decided in *Miller* that section 1089 is facially valid under the Sixth Amendment, we need only decide whether its application in the circumstances of this case violated Perez's Sixth Amendment rights."), *cert. denied*, 118 S.Ct. 893 (1998). Specifically, the Court must determine whether good cause existed to discharge Juror No. 5. In doing so, however, the Court accords the trial court's findings regarding juror fitness special deference, and reviews the trial court's findings only for "manifest error." *Id.* ("[O]n habeas review, a trial court's findings regarding juror fitness are entitled to special deference.").

The California Court of Appeal concluded that substantial evidence supported the trial court's conclusion that there was good cause to discharge Juror No. 5. (Respondent's Lodgment No. 5, Court of Appeal Opinion at 14). The court of appeal noted that "Juror No. 5's demeanor and responses when initially questioned by the trial court revealed that she was extremely upset." (Respondent's Lodgment No. 5, Court of Appeal Opinion at 12). "Her responses to the next day's follow-up questioning demonstrated that her distress had caused her to stop deliberating, and revealed a troubling equivocation as to why she had been distressed." (*Id.*). The court of appeal further noted that Juror No. 5 was not candid with the trial court about why she was having difficulty deliberating:

> [T]he initial questioning of Juror No. 5 revealed that she might indeed be refusing to deliberate

> because she felt intimidated by the other jurors, even though she insisted she had been deliberating properly. When the trial court examined her the next day, however, Juror No. 5 gave several different stories. First she seemed to blame her emotional distress the day before on her brother-in-law's death. Then she conceded it hadn't been the death which upset her (because she didn't learn of it until that night), but that it had been her brother-in-law's illness.

(Respondent's Lodgment No. 5, Court of Appeal Opinion at 14). Thus, the court of appeal concluded that, "[i]n these circumstances, the trial court did not abuse its discretion by discharging her." (*Id.*).

The court of appeal's conclusion was neither contrary to, nor involved an unreasonable application of, clearly established federal law, as determined by the United States Supreme Court. 28 U.S.C. 2254(d). California law permits a trial court to remove a juror that refuses to either follow the law or deliberate. *See, People v. Engelman,* 28 Cal. 4th 436, 442 (2002) ("A juror who actually refuses to deliberate is subject to discharge by the court."); *Cleveland,* 25 Cal. 4th at 485 ("[P]roper grounds for removing a deliberating juror include refusal to deliberate."). In addition, both trial-related and non-trial-related stress can provide good cause for discharging a juror. *See Perez,* 119 F.3d at 1426-28 (trial court had good cause to discharge emotionally distraught juror, even though the juror's "infirmity as a juror could have been triggered or exacerbated by her disagreement with the other jurors as to [the petitioner's] guilt"); *see also People v. Fudge,* 7 Cal. 4th 1075, 1099-1100 (1994) (anxiety over new job); *People v. Collins,* 17 Cal. 3d 687, 696 (1976) (juror said she could not decide case "on the evidence and the law since she was

involved emotionally more than intellectually," "that she could not follow the court's instructions, [and] that she had been upset throughout the trial").

Here, the record supports the trial court's conclusion that there was good cause to discharge Juror No. 5 and, accordingly, supports the conclusion that the state court did not unreasonably apply clearly established federal law. Separate interviews with three other jurors revealed that, following a two-week trial, after only two hours, Juror No. 5 stopped participating in deliberations. (RT at 798-802, 808-11, 814-16). Indeed, as the court of appeal noted, "Juror No. 5's own statement to the trial court the second time she was examined – when she said, 'I made up my mind that I am a juror and I have to do my job and . . . weigh the evidence, and I am going to do my job' – demonstrates she had not been deliberating the day before." (Respondent's Lodgment No. 5, Court of Appeal Opinion at 11-12).

When initially questioned by the trial court, Juror No. 5 appeared extremely upset, even crying. (RT at 804-834). The next day, she informed the trial court about her brother-in-law's death. (RT at 825). The trial court was in the best position to observe Juror No. 5's physical appearance and demeanor and thereby determine her ability to continue deliberating. *See Perez,* 119 F.3d at 1427. The trial court reported: "I have had an opportunity to observe all three of the jurors – excuse me – four jurors that I have made inquiry of and see their facial expressions, the tone and manner of the way that they discussed things. And it's my call that I think that Juror No. 5 is emotionally distraught and couldn't say it yesterday, and still looked emotionally distraught today." (RT at 836). Defense counsel also stated that Juror No. 5 appeared "emotionally

fragile." (RT at 834-35). Though Juror No. 5 stated that she was capable of deliberating, the trial court was entitled to discount Juror No. 5's verbal declarations when they conflicted with her demeanor. *See People v. Lucas,* 12 Cal. 4th 415, 489 (1995) ("Although the juror stated the cancellation of her vacation would not affect the discharge of her duties as a juror, her behavior and demeanor supplied substantial evidence to the contrary . . . The court determined that the juror's demeanor indicated her ability to deliberate fairly would be substantially impaired if the penalty trial caused her to cancel her vacation.").

Additionally, the trial court questioned Juror No. 5's candor. When first asked about why she was having difficulty deliberating, Juror No. 5 indicated that she was upset because the other jurors were intimidating her. (RT at 804-06). The next day, however, she told the trial court that she had been upset because of her brother-in-law's death. (RT at 825). Then she conceded that it was not the death that had upset her (because she did not learn of it until that night), but rather her brother-in-law's illness. (RT at 825-26). Based on these inconsistent responses, the trial court concluded that Juror No. 5 was not being "honest about what was taking place." (RT at 898). Under these circumstances, the trial court did not err by concluding that good cause existed for Juror No. 5's removal from the jury.

Petitioner also faults the trial court for discharging Juror No. 5 because she was the "lone juror holding out for acquittal." (Petition at 16). According to Petitioner, the trial court's dismissal of Juror No. 5 resulted in "entrusting the determination of whether petitioner was innocent or guilty to a tribunal organized to convict." (Petition at 17-18). This argument lacks merit. First, Petitioner cites no evidence showing that Juror No. 5 was, in fact, the "lone juror

holding out for acquittal." Indeed, during argument on Petitioner's new trial motion, defense counsel stated that Juror No. 5 was one of two jurors for a verdict of not guilty. (RT at 880). Second, nothing in the record suggests that the trial court knew that Juror No. 5 was for acquittal. Before questioning the jurors, the trial court cautioned: "I don't want you to offer anything that goes to your mind-set, how you are deliberating, what your vote may be, or questions of facts or evidence." (RT at 808, *see also* RT at 799, 803, 814). And during discussion of Petitioner's new trial motion, the trial court stated: "I specifically asked all jurors not to indicate which way the vote was going, and there was no indication which way the vote was going, so I don't know what she was voting for at all." (RT at 880). Third, even assuming that Juror No. 5 was the lone holdout juror and the trial court knew this, the claim would still fail. A trial judge's awareness that a juror is holding out for acquittal does not invalidate [the judge's] decision to excuse [the juror] from jury service." *Perez,* 119 F.3d at 1427 (*citing United States v. Huntress,* 956 F.2d 1309, 1313 (5th Cir. 1992) (court's knowledge that removed juror was a hold-out juror did not "raise a red flag")). Furthermore, after removing Juror No. 5, the trial court instructed the jury to begin their deliberations anew with the alternate juror: "The people and the defendant have the right to a verdict reached only after a full participation of the 12 jurors who return the verdict. This right may be assured only if you begin your deliberations again from the beginning." (RT at 838).

In sum, substantial evidence supports the trial court's decision to discharge Juror No. 5. Moreover, even if the trial court erred, it is not enough to show that the state court was merely incorrect in discharging the juror. Federal habeas corpus relief is available only when a

federal court concludes that the state court applied federal law unreasonably. *Williams,* 529 U.S. at 411. Here, as discussed above, the trial court went to great lengths to investigate the problems that Juror No. 5 had. In making his decision, the trial judge even cited to case authority. (RT at 833). Under these circumstances, the trial court did not violate Petitioner's constitutional rights by discharging Juror No. 5. Thus, the Court rejects Petitioner's claim.[2]

RECOMMENDATION

THE COURT, THEREFORE, RECOMMENDS that the District Court issue an Order: (1) approving and adopting this Final Report and Recommendation; and (2) directing that Judgment be entered denying the Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus and dismissing this action with prejudice.

DATED: February 28, 2005

/s/ Jennifer T. Lum
JENNIFER T. LUM
UNITED STATES
MAGISTRATE JUDGE

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[2] Respondent also argues that Petitioner's claim is unexhausted. (Return at 9-14). However, because the court finds that the claim fails on the merits, there is no need to address Respondent's exhaustion argument. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 2254(b)(2); *Smith v. Ratelle*, 323 F.3d 813, 820 n.1 (9th Cir. 2003) ("A district court has the option of denying a petition containing unexhausted claims on the merits."); *Phillips v. Woodford*, 267 F.3d 966, 974 (9th Cir. 2001) (noting that a district court may decide unexhausted claims if "a return to state court for exhaustion would be futile").

APPENDIX C

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS

FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT

DAVID ANGEL DIAZ, Petitioner – Appellant, v. EDWARD S. ALAMEIDA, JR., Defendant – Appellee.	No. 05-56257 D.C. No. CV-03-08378-DDP Central District of California, Los Angeles ORDER (Filed Apr. 19, 2007)

Before: GIBSON*, FISHER and CALLAHAN, Circuit Judges.

The panel has voted to deny the petition for rehearing. Judge Fisher and Judge Callahan have voted to deny the petition for rehearing en banc, and Judge Gibson so recommends.

The full court has been advised of the petition for rehearing en banc and no judge has requested a vote on whether to rehearing the matter en banc. Fed. R. App. p. 35.

The petition for rehearing and petition for rehearing en banc, filed March 13, 2007, is **DENIED.**

* The Honorable John R. Gibson, Senior United States Circuit Judge for the Eighth Circuit, sitting by designation.